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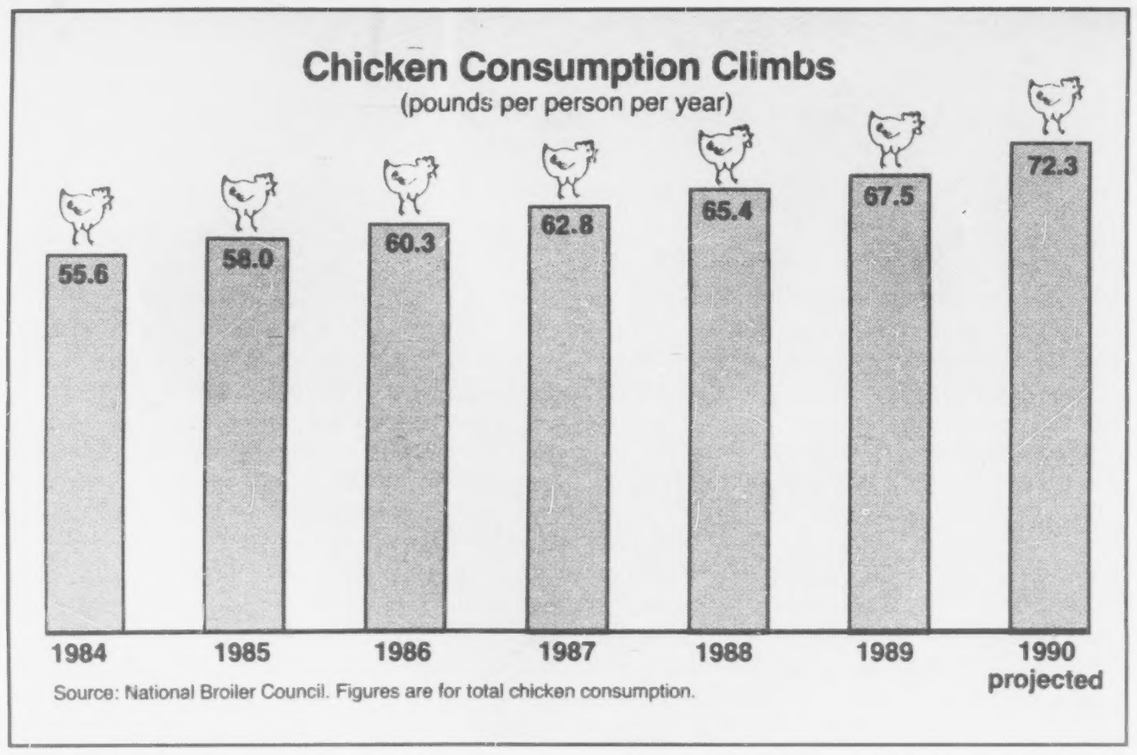


100 ways to cook your chicken

(Continued from page 33)

its volume from take-out and delivery.

Although the company constantly updates the menu, Medinger says Cluckers has a few old standbys that have helped to give the 5-year-old operation a loyal following. Among those signature dishes are blackened Cajun-style chicken; mixed, grilled chicken with andouille sausage; charbroiled chicken; three-mustard chicken; and chicken casserole.

"The fact that people are looking for something with a health element to it really puts chicken restaurants in a good position," he explains. "What makes it even more attractive, though, is that it has the right price for both operator and customer."

Chicken, however, has not always had the right price.

Throughout the decade of the '80s, wholesale chicken prices, as measured by the Bureau of Labor Statistics tracking of processed young chickens, looked more like a roller-coaster silhouette as prices rose and fell sharply.

Much of the pricing fluctuation was due to the launching of chicken sandwiches at the giant hamburger chains during the mid-'80's. Between 1984 and 1986, prices climbed 9.6 percent before falling in 1987 by 13 percent, because of oversupply. For the most recent year available, 1988, prices rose 11.5 percent.

The increases in the wholesale price of chicken have not dissuaded operators from jumping into the field, nor have the hikes restrained restaurateurs from tinkering with their menus.

Just recently, Keith Famie, a noted Detroit restaurateur and owner of Les Auteurs, announced his plan to open Famie's Chicken, one of the new breed of gourmet, quick- serve chicken restaurants.

Famie, whom culinary magazines have celebrated, said the restaurant would specialize in rotisserie or oven-roasted chicken.

"This is about the purest way to cook chicken because it never touches the flame," Famie says. "You end up with a crisp skin, moist meat and no carcinogen fears."

Another company contemplating cooking chicken through the rotisserie format is Peppy Poulet, the Danvers, Mass.-based concern that hopes to have three stores in operation by year's end. Michelle Peletier, director of franchise sales and development, says the company opened its first unit a year ago in Boynton Beach, Fla.

"I really think we hit the market at the right time," Peletier says. "Given that the aging baby boomers are more self-conscious about nutrition and tired of hamburgers and pizza, the market has come to demand quality fast food."

Another company that wants to spice up the chicken side of its menu is Po Folks, the Nashville, Tenn.-based family-dining operator. Long identifed for its Southern-fried chicken dinner, the chain has begun test- marketing char-grilled chicken, along with seafood and pork.

Paul Umphenour, director of operations for Po Folks franchisee Folks Inc. of Norcross, Ga., says the company is test marketing char-grilled chicken in three of its 18 units. He notes the char-grilled chicken product in the test is outselling the pork and haddock by two to one.

"One of the good things about char-grilled products is that it negates the veto vote," Umphenour explains. "Say there were four or five people in an office, getting ready to go to lunch, and they decide on Po Folks, but one of them says, 'But all they have is fried chicken.'

"Well, hopefully, this will eliminate that by broadening our appeal."

Po Folks, like KFC, will not abandon its heritage fried items, Umphenour stresses.

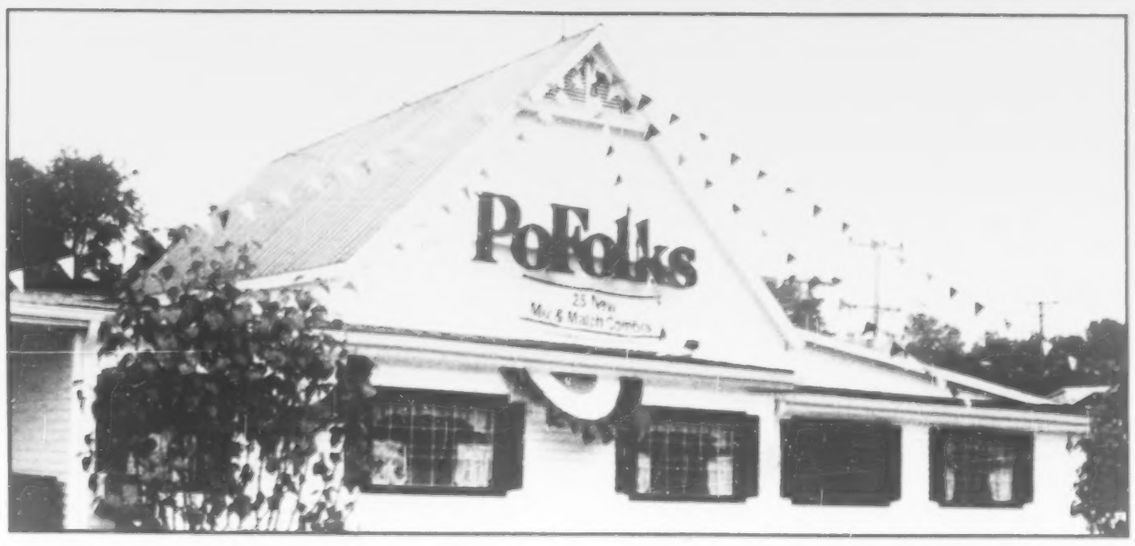
Church's Chicken, the Popeyes subsidiary, intends to increase the selection of chicken items on its menu as a move to improve its competitiveness as well. In a proxy statement filed in September, Church's said it was looking to introduce a new Southern-style fried chicken and new biscuits during the coming year.

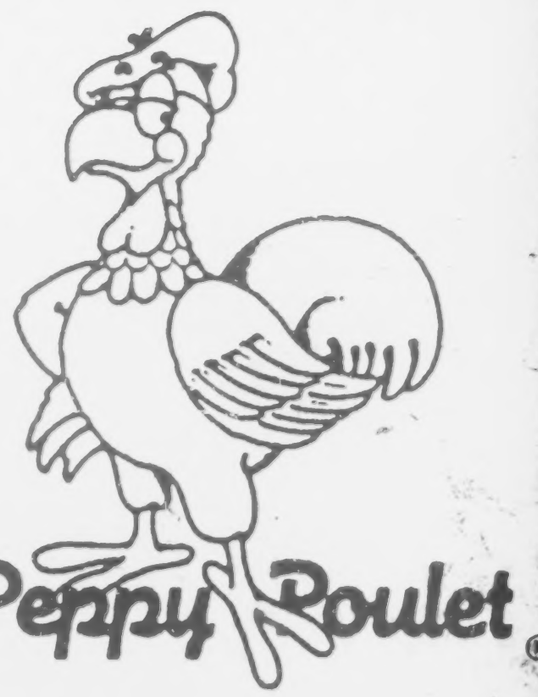
Poultry Entrées Increase on Restaurant Menus Between 1984 to 1989

Type of entrée	Percentage change
Combination Plates (seafood/beef/etc.)	103%
Salads	57
Poultry	16
Pizza	4
Seafood	– 1
Red Mean and Game	– 15
Tex-Mex	– 15
Egg Dishes	– 35

Source: National Restaurant Association study of 2,124 menus involving 100 restaurants.

> "The fact that people are looking for something with a health element to it really puts chicken restaurants in a good position."





Left: Units for Kentucky Fried Chicken, top, and PoFolks, which are two of the many chains testing new chicken items to boost sales. Above: a Peppy Poulet logo. The Danvers, Mass., chain has found its niche in the market with rotisserie chicken.

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SECOND CLASS

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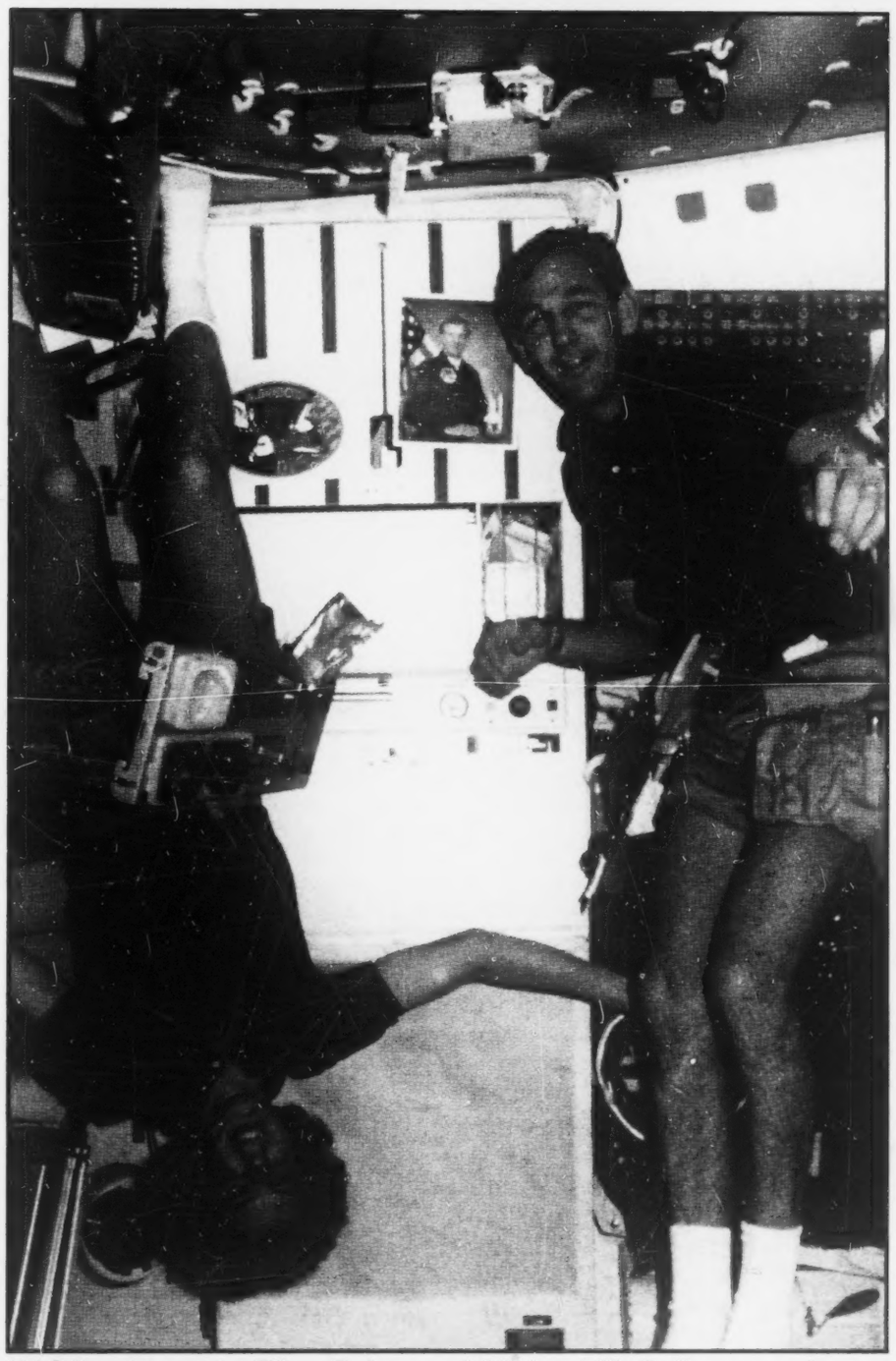

NASA astronauts Ellen Baker and Michael McCulley experience mealtime in a zero-gravity environment during a space flight.

SPACE FOOD: NASA probes limits of food technology

by Tracey Taylor Woodard

JOHNSON SPACE CENTER, Texas — Scientists at the Food Systems Engineering Facility here spend a lot of time dispelling myths about food in space.

Contrary to popular belief, the food available to today's earth-orbiting astronauts no longer comes in tubes and cubes, but shiny silver pouches and opaque plastic containers.

And rather than the semi-liquids and freeze-dried powders of yesteryear, today's astronauts design their own menus from a selection of fully prepared heat-and-eat entrées and rehydratable vegetables that includes scrambled eggs, chicken à la king, salmon, barbecue, frankfurters and shrimp cocktail.

Aside from the packaging, said Charles T. Bourland, food scientist with the Man-Systems Division of the National Aeronautics Space Administration, the food is very similar to what is served in restaurants and homes across the country. In fact, he said, most of it is commercially prepared by the country's leading foodservice companies.

"We've been living off the foodservice industry for a long time," Bourland said, pointing to a now famous orange-flavored powdered-drink mix that lent itself perfectly to space travel.

Bourland said budget constraints have forced a scaleback of research and development over the years, so the staff in NASA's food lab spends a lot of time watching for revolutionary packaging and pro-

*(See **SPACE FOOD**, page 46)*

Hotels, operators find profits in partnership

Restaurateurs check into hotel locations

by Milford Prewitt

Like would-be sweethearts who secretly admired one another but were too clumsy or shy to connect, hoteliers and restaurateurs around the nation are moving beyond silent mutual attraction by uniting their businesses in partnership.

In what those involved see as a profitable business opportunity, hotels are increasingly courting prominent restaurateurs and foodservice groups to run the lodging establishment's food operations, including room service.

Hotel managers, independent restaurateurs and executives of foodservice groups said the pluses in the relationship far outweigh the minuses. They indicate that their partnership is a rapidly growing trend that promises radical change in the restaurant business during the 1990s, particularly for those restaurateurs who desire high-profile locations in high-rent areas.

*(See **HOTELS**, page 81)*

What's in it for me?
(Some of the reasons hotel and restaurant operators are getting together)

Hotels	Restaurants
Eliminate food costs	High-profile location
Can focus on lodging business	Little or no equipment costs
Collect 4 to 9 percent of gross revenue of f&b operations	Low rent
Build image with destination eatery	No marketing expenses
Reduce payroll	Round-the-clock business
	Little or no property insurance costs

Source: NRN

General Mills unveils China Coast concept

by Jack Hayes

ORLANDO, Fla. — General Mills Restaurants Inc. is serving Florida tourists a spicy taste of the Orient at China Coast here, a recently launched ethnic concept that could be the prototype for its third dinner house chain.

Using delicate Japanese paper lanterns, colorful Polynesian chairs, a Dim Sum appetizer chef and a $4.95 all-you-can-eat lunch buffet, the parent of Red Lobster and The Olive Garden drew an opening- day crowd at China Coast without spending a dollar on advertising.

The new Chinese restaurant — which features a mix of Mandarin, Szechuan and Cantonese dishes plus an assortment of California wines and several Asian beers — is housed in a former York Steak House on International Drive.

In fact, the new China Coast is across the street from General Mills' very first Olive

*(See **CHINA**, page 4)*

KFC pioneer Harman wins IFMA Silver Plate

by Charles Bernstein

CHICAGO — Leon "Pete" Harman, the pioneering Kentucky Fried Chicken franchisee, won the International Foodservice Manufacturers Association's 1990 Silver Plate Operator of the Year award here in the chain fast-service category earlier this month.

The chairman of Harman Management Corp., Los Altos, Calif., was recognized for 35 years of motivating KFC executives and franchisees throughout the system and in his own company of 235 leading KFC units.

Sentiment on the 18-person jury appeared to favor Harman as the possible Gold Plate winner from among the nine

*(See **SILVER**, page 81)*

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NEWS BRIEFS

Mister Donut licensees ask FTC to stop buyout

PHILADELPHIA — A group of Mister Donut franchisees has asked the Federal Trade Commission to prohibit the chain's planned acquisition by Allied-Lyons PLC, the parent company of Dunkin' Donuts.

The 130 members of the Mister Donut National Dealers Association claim that the addition of their 588-unit chain would give Allied-Lyons control of nearly 65 percent of the U.S. retail doughnut market, thereby providing the leverage necessary to regulate doughnut prices. Dunkin' has 1,900 units.

"We're part of a dying chain," said Dick Haefner, a member of the board of directors for the Mister Donut Dealers Association. "Dunkin' has already said they won't renew any more Mister Donut franchises. So either we convert, or slowly go out of business."

Pantera's prexy resigns; company delisted by NASDAQ

DALLAS — Gary Lomax, a longtime executive of Pantera's Corp. who held a number of positions before gaining the president's suite, has resigned and is no longer associated with the company's subsidiary, Pizza Inn.

Lomax's departure comes about two weeks after Jeffrey Rogers, former president and chief executive officer of USA Cafes, was named president and chief executive officer of Pizza Inn.

Two other longtime Pantera executives — Jack D. Harris and Roy J. Schumacher — remain on the board of directors.

Meanwhile, Pantera's failure to file a quarterly or annual report within the limits of an extended deadline has resulted in the delisting of its common stock from NASDAQ and the company has reported it cannot state when or if it will file any future periodic reports.

Pantera's has been operating under Chapter 11 since October and is continuing to formulate a reorganization plan.

Schmidt, Ilitch team up to open new restaurant

DETROIT — Jimmy Schmidt, chef-owner of the Riverplace Rattlesnake Club here, is opening a second restaurant, Tres Vite, in partnership with Michael Ilitch, founder and chairman of Farmington Hills, Mich.-based Little Caesars Enterprises.

The 100-seat restaurant is located on the street level of the Fox Building, the Detroit landmark owned by Ilitch. According to Schmidt, Tres Vite — which means "very fast" — will be an American-style bistro offering thin crust pizzas, salads, sandwiches, roast chicken, and various paillards. Check averages are expected to run $6 at lunch and $20 for dinner.

Tres Vite is scheduled to open in mid-April.

Wisconsin judge okays taxing the skies

MADISON, Wis. — A Wisconsin judge has clouded airline caterers' skies by ruling that the state can tax alcoholic drinks sold on airplanes flying above Wisconsin.

Legal experts predict that the ruling will spur other states to also levy in-air surcharges. Caterers may be forced to adopt complex accounting systems for tracking how much each state should collect from interstate flights.

In Wisconsin, officials have already indicated that they will attempt to avert a logistical nightmare by levying the tax solely on carriers with ground operations within the state.

Famous Restaurants head may lead LBO

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Dennis B. Mullen, chairman, chief executive and president of Famous Restaurants, said he may lead a leveraged buyout of the company.

In a statement, Mullen said he expected that the company would be worth $2.50 a share or about $17.5 million. In recent trading, Famous Restaurant stock closed at $1.50.

Famous comprises 55 restaurants, including 44 Garcia's Mexican Restaurants, 9 Casa Lupita Mexican Restaurants and two Famous Fish Co. Restaurants.

Inflight group to develop own food-handling code

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Preempting "universal" regulations being developed by the government, a group of airline foodservice professionals has won federal approval to draft an industry-specific food-handling code.

U.S. Food and Drug Administration approval of the Inflight Food Service Association's request to draft a model quality assurance program comes as the FDA is formulating its own general purpose "Unicode." The so-called Unicode will replace the 1976 Retail Food Code, which is currently used to regulate supermarkets, vending machines, restaurants and airline feeding.

IFSA, which said its Government Affairs Committee will draft the regulations, said the specialized code should help "overcome many of the difficulties posed by compromises inherent in the combined code, and allow the industry to better address its own specific food safety needs."

Arby's tests array of new sandwiches

ATLANTA — Exploring popular taste trends from barbecue to New Orleans, Arby's Inc. is testing a bevy of new sandwiches.

"Smokehouse" sandwiches include a smoked ham deluxe and a smoked turkey deluxe — both with lettuce, tomato and mayonnaise — plus a smokehouse club, which includes both sliced meats, bacon, lettuce, tomato and mayonnaise, said Arby's president Frank Belatti. The sandwiches sell for between $1.99 and $2.29 each.

Also in test are such items as the "Albuquerque turkey" sandwich, with sliced turkey, lettuce, tomato and a special southwestern sauce, and New Orleans-style Po Boy and muffaletta sandwiches, Belatti said.

Meanwhile, Arby's is bringing back its 99-cent "roast beef classics" line of downsized sandwiches for a limited March run systemwide. Arby's is evaluating whether it will make the line a permanent menu addition, Belatti noted.

Chili's launches strip steak

DALLAS — Chili's, the 196-unit casual dinner house chain based here, has added a strip steak platter to its menu.

Strategic development vice president F. Lane Cardwell reports that the 10-ounce steak platter, introduced in mid-January, comes with barbecue beans, Texas toast and curly fries. The $9.95 item is the first traditional steak entrée that Chili's has introduced.

Chili's plans to launch a grilled Caribbean chicken salad, made with grilled strips of marinated chicken, on April 1. According to Cardwell, the menu addition will be priced at $5.75.

Wendy's profits plunge in 4th Q but rise for year

DUBLIN, Ohio — Despite a 16-percent drop in fourth-quarter profits, Wendy's International said its net income for 1989 rose by 7 percent from the prior year's tally, to $30.4 million.

However, the company acknowledged that a change in accounting methods yielded $5.2 million of the 1989 profit total.

Revenues grew by less than 1 percent, to $1.07 billion.

In releasing the figures, Wendy's noted that the fast-food market has been the scene of widespread discounting. It mentioned that the number of transactions at company stores rose during the fourth quarter of 1989 by 4 percent, while average unit sales increased by 3.1 percent.

Net profits for the quarter were off 16 percent, to $5.7 million, on a 1 percent increase in revenues, to $261.1 million.

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NEWS

Massey, built KFC, dead at 85

by Peter Romeo

PALM BEACH, Fla. — Jack C. Massey, an entrepreneur who stepped out of retirement in 1964 to buy a then-fledgling restaurant chain called Kentucky Fried Chicken, has died after a short illness. He was 85.

At the time of his death, the one-time delivery boy was chairman of Volunteer Capital Corp., a Wendy's franchisee and the former franchisor of the Mrs. Winner's Chicken & Biscuits fast-food chain.

When the company was struggling in 1988 to meet its debt obligations, Massey provided funds to retire two outstanding loans. His action helped the concern thwart a hostile takeover attempt by industry veteran Joseph Spillman.

In the years between his co-ownership of KFC and his involvement with Volunteer, Massey left an indelible mark on the health-care industry when he co-founded Hospital Corp. of America. Under Massey's tutelage, the company became one of the nation's largest owners of hospitals.

Massey

Massey began his career as a delivery boy for his uncle's pharmacy in Tennille, Ga. Fascinated with the drugstore trade, he became a pharmacist and opened several shops of his own, in Nashville, Tenn.

At the height of the Great Depression, Massey cashed in his small pharmacy chain and began selling surgical supplies. His business flourished as the economy rebounded.

In 1961, while in his early 50s, Massey sold the medical-supply company and retired. But his respite was short-lived.

In 1964, after searching for a new entrepreneurial opportunity, he and partner John Y. Brown presented Col. Harland Sanders with a bid for his Kentucky Fried Chicken chain. Sanders accepted the offer, and KFC entered a new era.

Massey and Brown rapidly expanded the chain before selling it to Heublein Corp. in 1969.

Massey spent most of the 1970s launching and expanding Hospital Corp. of America. He parted with the company in 1978 and then plunged back into the foodservice business via Mrs. Winner's.

China Coast serves taste of the Orient

(Continued from page 1)

Garden restaurant, which opened in 1982.

Shunning the exotic, China Coast captures the ambience of the Orient by using landscaping, white siding and a slightly curved turquoise roof. The open interior becomes brighter and much breezier when quaint sliding windows are pushed open.

A Chinese cook works the Dim Sum appetizer bar, entertaining China Coast patrons like the pasta makers at The Olive Garden. The Dim Sum chef steams and deep-fries such items as Chinese pot stickers, Shanghai dumplings, Cantonese wontons, Szechuan chicken wings and teriyaki skewers.

"The idea is very good; America has nothing like it," admitted Tzow Chyi Chen, whose nearby Ming Garden restaurant on International Drive, with $12 average dinner checks, is seen as China Coast's main rival here.

But General Mills, the quiet giant that owns and operates 450 Red Lobster restaurants and another 175 domestic units of The Olive Garden, is going to wait a while before reading the fortune of its newest venture.

"It's way too early to talk about China Coast," said spokeswoman Anne Powell of the test unit, which is located about halfway between Walt Disney World and downtown Orlando — a city 13.5 million tourists visited last year.

Sources said the concept team would put at least six months into fine-tuning before a second Orlando unit opens.

China Coast is currently serving its $4.95 lunch buffet from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. and dinner until 11 p.m. As the concept moves ahead, one of the development team's key considerations could be whether lunch buffet traffic offsets any cannibalization of regular menu sales.

The interior of the newly opened China Coast in Orlando, Fla.

China Coast
Orlando, Fla.
Concept: Casual Chinese dinner house
Opened: February 1990
Average checks: $7 lunch; $11 dinner
Projected volume: Over $2 million a year
Ownership: General Mills Restaurants Inc.
Source: NRN

China Coast is serving 12 appetizers, three soups, four desserts — and 44 entrées. Three "spice" levels are available and a choice of fried or steamed rice.

Cantonese dishes range from sweet and sour shrimp at $8.95 to dragon and phoenix at $11.95 to almond gai ding at $7.95. Mandarin specialties include mu shu chicken at $7.95 and Shanghai ginger shrimp at $10.95. Among the Szechuan plates are spicy chicken with cashews and Hunan triple crown at $11.95.

Three American items — charbroiled New York strip steak, fried chicken breast and fried shrimp — are also available.

"They're going to be healthy competitors," Ming Garden's Chen noted.

"We're extremely interested," added Joe Zhou, the manager at Hunan, one of four independent Chinese operators within walking distance of China Coast.

International Drive patrons — mostly tourists — represent a cross section of America, even the world. And China Coast's proximity to so many other Chinese restaurants gives General Mills a chance to read how the concept may do vs. independents in other markets.

"The lanterns are Japanese, and the chairs are Polynesian," joked Chen, who is nevertheless awed by the Dim Sum chef idea.

Not only was General Mills encouraged by its own research calling Chinese food the most popular ethnic cuisine in the nation, but the company got new validation from a recent National Restaurant Association study ranking Chinese ahead of Italian and Mexican fare.

China Coast
Menu Sampler

Appetizers	
Cantonese wontons	$1.95
Chinese pot stickers	$2.95
Egg roll	$1.45
Egg drop soup for two	$2.45
Entrées	
Moo goo gai pan	$7.95
Steamed subgum wonton	$12.95
Pepper steak	$7.95
Sizzling seafood wor bar	$12.95
Pork lo mein	$6.25
Spicy shrimp with cashews	$8.95
Kung pao pork	$7.95
Hunan triple crown	$11.95
Desserts	
Chinese silk pie	$2.45
Great wall of chocolate cake	$2.75

China Coast restaurant sign.